

EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT (4,5 AND 6) REGULATIONS

Please read these regulations in conjunction with Signature Qualification Specification on our website.

PART 1 of 3

1.1 Candidate registration

Signature will only accept candidate registrations from centres that are approved to offer this qualification. Centres must also be approved at the time of the sessions taking place.

Approved centres must register candidates onto a Booking via IRIS when they are enrolled for the qualification. Please ensure that the candidate has verified the spelling of their name at the time of registering them on IRIS, as this name is used to generate certificates upon successful completion of the qualification.

Centres must register existing candidates using their name and/or Signature unique learner ID number. New candidates will be issued with a unique learner ID number, by Signature, upon registration.

Centres (excludes Scotland) should also enter the candidates national Unique Learner Number (ULN) into the appropriate field. New candidates should be allocated a national ULN by the centre.

1.2 Reasonable adjustments for candidates with particular assessment requirements

Please read the Reasonable Adjustment to Assessment Arrangements policy, available on Signature website.

Before requesting a reasonable adjustment on behalf of a candidate, the centre should be

satisfied that the adjustment applied for will enable the candidate to attempt to meet the same standards of assessment as a candidate without the disability, difficulty or special need concerned.

Centres requesting a reasonable adjustment must make the request when they add the candidate to a Session and upload any supporting medical evidence.

Signature will respond to the request via the booking/session form to indicate whether the adjustment requested has been approved. Do not assume that all requests for reasonable adjustments will be approved.

1.3 Booking a Session

When candidates are ready to take assessments, centres must create a Session under the Booking ID. We require:

6ASS4 – Formal Critical Discussion - at least 7 days prior to the session date.

6ASS5 – Formal Presentation – at least 4 weeks notice of the session date.

6ASS6 – Receptive Skills – at least 14 days notice of the session date.

For assessments that are to be taken remotely, some will be chosen to be invigilated by a Signature appointed online invigilator who will be asked to view the assessment as it is taking place. We will notify you if your assessment is chosen for this purpose.

The session date is chosen by the centre. It is the date when all candidates registered on that Session will complete the assessment. Before finalising any Session please ensure the date, and the candidates registered on that session are correct. Any session must be finalised before the notice period stipulated in these regulations as changes cannot be made after. Under exceptional circumstances, centres may request to change arrangements for their finalised sessions by contacting Signature. Charges may apply.

If a centre does not finalise a session an administration fee may be charged.

Centres will be invoiced for candidate registration fees after the date of the session.

1.4 Changes to Sessions

Once the session is finalised any candidate who cannot attend, must not be permitted to take the assessment at any other time or on any other date. They must notify Signature by adding a public comment in the Booking Form that the candidate did not attend.

Candidates who do not attend due to medical or bereavement reasons, will be entitled to a full refund of their candidate registration fee upon production of appropriate evidence.

1.5 Assessment Materials

6ASS4 – Formal Critical Discussion

Three topic titles will be selected at random and issued to the centre online, via IRIS, 5 days prior to the assessment date. These must be kept secure until the day of the assessment and must not be communicated to candidates until they are in the preparation room on the agreed date of the assessment.

6ASS5 – Formal Presentation

- Three topic titles will be selected at random and issued to the centre online, via IRIS, 5 days prior to the assessment date.
- The centre must forward these topic titles to the candidates no less than 2 weeks prior to the assessment date.
- The candidate will have 2 weeks to prepare for this assessment and must choose one of the three topic titles from the list of three topic titles provided by Signature.

6ASS6 Receptive Skills Exam

Five days prior to the assessment the centre will receive an email and password to access the assessment material for assessment. You should use the admin password to view the recording to ensure that it is working correctly. The candidate passwords and classlink password must be sent to your candidates no earlier than 15 minutes prior to the assessment date and time.

The content of all assessment materials is strictly confidential. The centre must not discuss or show the content of any assessment materials to candidates or any other third party, unless stated in these regulations. A breach of this regulation would be considered

malpractice and the centre would be dealt with accordingly. Please refer to Signature's Malpractice Policy on the website.

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Assessments must be carried out under 'examination conditions', that is, the candidate must not receive help from anyone during the assessment.

2.1 People involved in the assessment at the centre

It is the responsibility the centre to appoint suitably qualified and experienced people to act as teachers. Signature requires centres to appoint a teacher **and** an assessment co-ordinator for face to face assessments.

a) Teacher

Centres are responsible for briefing teachers on their role in the assessment, and for ensuring that they conduct the assessment in accordance with Signature regulations. It is not acceptable for the teacher to also act as an assessment co-ordinator.

b) Assessment co-ordinator (Face to Face assessments only)

Centres are responsible for briefing assessment co-ordinators, and for ensuring that they are familiar with the regulations governing the conduct of external assessments and ensure Signature regulations are followed during assessments. The assessment co-ordinator may not take part in the assessment as a candidate or teacher.

2.2 Room requirements (Face to Face assessments only)

6ASS4 – Formal Critical Discussion

The centre will need to provide one room for this assessment:

The waiting room/area:

- For the candidate to wait undisturbed for their assessment
- No unauthorised personnel are allowed in the assessment room. Where another person has been given permission by Signature to be in the assessment room (for example as a

result of a reasonable adjustment request), Signature will have informed the centre in advance

The preparation room:

- For the candidate to view topic titles and prepare undisturbed for their assessment
- Must be a restricted area for the purpose of the assessment
- No unauthorised personnel are allowed in the assessment room. Where another person has been given permission by Signature to be in the assessment room (for example as a result of a reasonable adjustment request), Signature will have informed the centre in advance

The assessment room:

- Must be identified by an appropriate sign outside of the room
- No unauthorised personnel are allowed in the assessment room. Where another person has been given permission by Signature to be in the assessment room (for example as a result of a reasonable adjustment request), Signature will have informed the centre in advance
- Must be set up correctly with recording equipment checked and in place. The teacher and candidate should both be viewable, in the viewing frame of the camera, and all BSL features fully visible

6ASS5 – Formal Presentation

The centre will need to provide three rooms for this assessment:

The waiting room/area:

- For the candidates to wait undisturbed for their assessment
- No unauthorised personnel are allowed in the waiting room/area. Where another person has been given by Signature to be in the waiting room/area (for example as a result of a reasonable adjustment request), Signature will have informed the centre in advance.
- Must be set up correctly with recording equipment checked and in place. The teacher and candidate should be viewable, in the viewing frame of the camera , and all BSL features fully visible

The assessment room:

- Must be identified by an appropriate sign outside the room
- No unauthorised personnel are allowed in the assessment room. Where another person has been given permission by Signature to be in the assessment room (for example as a result of a reasonable adjustment request), Signature will have informed the centre in advance
- Must be set up correctly with recording equipment checked and in place. The teacher and candidate should be viewable, in the viewing frame of the camera , and all BSL features fully visible

6ASS6 - Receptive Skills Exam

The centre will need to provide one room for this assessment:

The assessment room:

- Must be identified by an appropriate sign outside the room
- No unauthorised personnel are allowed in the assessment room. Where another person has been given permission by Signature to be in the assessment room (for example as a result of a reasonable adjustment request), Signature will have informed the centre in advance
- Must not contain displays of material which could be deemed to be of assistance to candidates in their completion of the assessment
- Must be set up correctly with recording equipment checked and in place.
- Equipment must be set up correctly and the assessment link should be ready to play at the start
- Appropriate screening should be put in place to prevent candidates being visible to each other during the assessment

2.3 Preparing for the assessment

Face to Face Assessments

For a large number of candidates, it is suggested that the teacher takes appropriate breaks.

When candidates arrive for the assessment, the assessment co-ordinator/invigilator will:

- ensure that mobile telephones are switched off
- carry out adequate checks to confirm the identity of all candidates
- remain in the waiting area with candidates
- ensure that candidates do not take any unauthorised items into the rooms unless agreed to by Signature beforehand
- inform candidates that they are now subject to the rules of the assessment
- at the relevant time, instruct each candidate to move to the appropriate room

6ASS4 – Formal Critical Discussion

Thirty minutes before the first candidate is due to arrive in the preparation room, the assessment co-ordinator will:

- give the teacher the three topic titles and ensure that the teacher goes in to the assessment room on their own to prepare for 20 minutes
- Write the topic titles on a flipchart or other suitable display in the preparation room. The topic titles can be communicated to the candidate in BSL if necessary
- explain to candidates that they have 30 minutes to prepare for their assessment with their teacher and during this time they can access the internet for research
- Instruct the candidates to leave the building once their assessment has finished, without communicating with other candidates waiting to be assessed

6ASS5 – Formal Presentation

The topic titles should be sent to the candidates 2 weeks prior to the assessment date and the candidate has 2 weeks to prepare their presentation for their assessment.

6ASS6 - Receptive Skills Exam

Before starting the recording, the invigilator must ensure that:

- blank paper to take notes on, are given to candidates no earlier than five minutes before the start of the assessment
- candidates are given clear instructions on how and when to complete their assessment
- candidates are reminded that they must not communicate with any other candidate during the assessment

- candidates can make notes but should take care that this does not cause them to miss part of the narrative, as the DVD cannot be paused or replayed. **Note sheets are part of the assessment and must be destroyed after the assessment has taken place.**
- the invigilator must announce clearly when candidates can begin

Remote Assessments.

Prior to the date of the assessment the centre must ask the candidate to download the chosen online video platform and ensure it is working on their laptop/tablet.

On the day of the assessment the teacher must arrange a suitable time with the candidate to send the link to the assessment by email. They must give the candidate the same preparation time as described above for face to face assessments.

If this is an assessment where we have asked for a remote invigilator to be present, please ensure the invigilator has been contacted by the teacher and invited to join the teacher on the online platform, prior to the assessment time and prior to the candidate joining so that they can see the checks below being carried out. You must also ensure that the invigilator can clearly see both the teacher and the candidate during the assessment time.

2.4 Assessment of Candidates

The centre is responsible for ensuring that suitable electronically-operated (not battery) equipment is provided and in good working order. Suitable equipment includes:

- DVD recorder
 - Video recorder
 - Tablet that complies with the following specifications:
- 5 or above megapixels
- Sufficient background lighting
- Does not automatically save via media accounts ie itunes or icloud
- Has a locking screen password (DDA)
- Is the property of the centre and not an individual.

Phones are not permitted as suitable recording equipment.

During the Assessment

6ASS4 and 6ASS5

The teacher must:

- collect each candidate in turn to carry out their assessment
- ensure that the camera is switched on for each candidate. Everyone should be viewable, in the viewing frame of the camera and all BSL features fully visible
- ensure sounds if switched on during the recording of the assessment
- ensure that no other person is in the assessment room (apart from the candidate and the teacher. Assessment 5 is a presentation so there may or may not be others present). It is acceptable for a responsible person, authorised by the centre, to be present only to operate the video camera and/or time the assessment, providing that they do not disrupt or take part in the assessment
- ensure that each candidate fingerspells his/her name in full at the start of the assessment in order to identify themselves. This is not marked as part of the assessment and is not included in the assessment timing
- ensure each candidate clearly signs their chosen topic in full. This is not marked as part of the assessment and is not included in the assessment timing
- start the assessment time when the discussion/presentation begins
- ensure the assessment is only completed once. No editing of the assessment is permitted. No additional recording can be made after the original assessment
- allow candidates to take written notes into the assessment room as an aide memoire. Candidates should be careful that using these notes do not unduly affect their fluency of their discussion/presentation
- end the discussion/presentation at an appropriate time at no less than 15 minutes and no more than 18 minutes
- switch off the recording equipment after each candidate has finished
- check that the assessment is viewable before the candidate leaves the room. If it is not viewable contact your Signature Customer Support Officer immediately.
- reset the camera at the right place for the next candidate

6ASS6 – Receptive Exam

The invigilator will:

- operate the equipment the assessment material is to be displayed on. **The centre is responsible for ensuring that electronically-operated (not battery) equipment is provided and in good working order**
- ensure the assessment material is played in full and is not paused or repeated at any point during the viewing of the clip
- supervise the candidates throughout the whole assessment. They must be alert and observe candidates at all times
- not take part in the assessment as a candidate
- ensure that candidates are not distracted or disturbed during the assessment
- ensure that no coaching or other assistance with BSL is given to candidates, except where previously agreed by Signature
- ensure the assessment material is not copied under any circumstances. **Copying is:**
 - **photocopying candidate note sheets**
 - **taking photographs or videos of the assessment clip/note sheets**
 - **taking copies of the assessment clip on USB/phone/tablet or any other format**
 - **transcribing the assessment clip**

This list is not exhaustive. Copying of assessment material of any kind would be deemed as malpractice and the centre would be dealt with accordingly.

Please refer to Signature’s Malpractice Policy on the website.

Order of signing on assessment clip:

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------|
| • Watch short synopsis | |
| • Watch part 1 questions | 10 minutes |
| • Watch part 1 | 5 minutes |
| • Answer part 1 questions | 15 minutes |
| • Watch part 2 questions | 10 minutes |
| • Watch part 2 | 5 minutes |
| • Answer part 2 questions | 15 minutes |

- Watch part 3 questions 10 minutes
- Watch part 3 5 minutes
- Answer part 3 questions 15 minutes
- Watch part 4 questions 10 minutes
- Watch part 4 5 minutes
- Answer part 4 questions 15 minutes

The final assessment submitted to Signature should only show the candidates answers.

2.5 Late arrival of candidates

Candidates who arrive after the timetabled start of their assessment may be allowed to complete their assessment. This is at the discretion of the centre and teacher.

2.6 Misconduct

If the teacher or assessment co-ordinator observes any misconduct, they must take steps to stop it.

They should:

- inform the candidate of what they propose to do
- note the time of the action
- add a public comment to the booking giving a brief description of what happened for Signature to review.

2.7 Special Consideration/Emergencies

Please see Signature's Special Consideration policy.

Special consideration may be agreed for candidates where performance in an assessment is affected by unforeseen circumstances.

If an emergency occurs during the assessment e.g fire alarm, bomb warning which may require the room to be evacuated.

If any of the above circumstances affects a candidate's performance in their assessment, the teacher should:

- **permit the candidate to carry on with their assessment from where the candidate left off, prior to the unforeseen circumstance or emergency.** This assessment would only be considered for marking by Signature if:
 - a) the candidate is willing and able to carry on with their assessment
 - b) if the candidate has been closely supervised and the teacher and co-ordinator can be assured that there has been no breach of assessment security, i.e. candidate did not communicate with any other person, nor consult any books or notes

If the candidate re-starts their assessment from the beginning, this will be marked as not assessed.
- add a public comment to the booking giving a brief description of what happened for Signature to review.

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After the Assessment

3.1 Appointment of external assessors

It is the responsibility of Signature to train and appoint suitably experienced people to act as external assessors.

3.2 Uploading the assessment for marking

The centre must:

- ensure that all candidates' recordings are viewable
- that the recording is uploaded to IRIS against the correct candidate for marking **within seven days of the assessment date.**

3.3 External quality assurance

If, as a result of quality assurance checks, there is cause for concern about the assessment, results may be delayed beyond the normal processing time.

Candidates' recorded evidence will be viewed by Signature approved staff only.

3.4 Issue of results

Signature will issue the results of the assessment via the Booking form in IRIS within six

weeks of assessment date for onward distribution to candidates.

3.5 Issue of certificates

Signature will issue certificates, for those who have achieved the full qualification, within two weeks of the results released date, for onward distribution to candidates. Signature will issue certificates using the spelling of the name as it appears in IRIS. Credit certificates for single units are available to download in IRIS.

3.6 Appeals

See Signature's website for appeals procedure.

3.7 Retention of evidence

Centres must securely store candidates' recorded evidence for a period of one year. All evidence can be stored electronically if a centre desires.